



How to start making an
Honest & Realistic Confession

All Saints Orthodox Christian Church

Salina, Kansas

How to start making an Honest & Realistic Confession

The first step consists of discovering and accepting the answer to the question - "WHAT IS SIN?".

When Jesus was asked which is the greatest commandment, he replied "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength" AND "to love your neighbors as yourself". He continued "On these two commandments hang all the law and prophets".

Any action or inaction concerning our conscious or unconscious use of thoughts, word or deeds that separate us from loving GOD, our neighbor and ourselves, IS SIN - the devil's chief instrument to divide and conquer.

We are all created by God in His image with the potential to reflect His love and forgiveness to all. This quality of love, (mirroring God's love) ennobles and enriches all relationships with our creator, neighbor and ourselves.

It is important to not confuse God's everlasting love with the selfish, self-centered love that we create on our own, trying to fill our feeling of emptiness, selfish wants and desires. When others reject this type of love (for whatever reason), we feel hurt, angry and discouraged. We then invariably turn to loving things which cannot hurt us. But hard as we try to fill our need for love by loving things, which cannot return our love, so we still feel unsatisfied & empty, because we have unknowingly reversed what God calls us to do.

We are created by God to thankfully use all things of His Creation to increase our love of Him and our neighbor. Unknowingly we often reverse His command by using people to obtain and sustain our love of things.

The most difficult problem in discovering and owning our sins is that we often cannot see or hear ourselves as we really are. The false assumption that we know ourselves is deceptive and our biggest hurdle. It's only when we can begin to see ourselves as God and other people see us, can we make a start to honestly confess our sins.

It's sad but true, that our parents, spouse, siblings and close friends are generally more able to make a more realistic and honest confession for us than we can for ourselves. To know thyself is painful. A process we desperately try to avoid, with the devil cheering us on. Let us pray "God help me to become who I am" - a beloved child of God created in His image.

USE SEPARATE ANSWER SHEET FOR EACH PREPARATION

This self-examination is adapted from the St. Augustine prayer book

I. PRIDE

"You shall have no other gods but me"

- a. Are you more interested in self than in God?
- b. Do you make it your chief aim to be always on top?
- c. Do you find yourself being vain about personal appearance?
 - d. clothes?
 - e. possessions?
 - f. family?
 - g. success in achievements?
- h. Are you ever critical of others for not being like you?
- i. Do you ever put people down for their misfortunes?
 - j. their sin
 - k. their stupidity
 - l. their weakness
 - m. or their religion?
- n. Do you brag, calling attention to yourself?
- o. Do you ever feel sorry for yourself?
- p. Do you find it difficult to admit when you are wrong?
- q. Do you find it difficult or refuse to apologize?
- r. Do you find it difficult to forgive?
- s. Do you find it difficult to ask others for forgiveness?
- t. Do you become resentful or suspicious of others?
- u. Are you stubborn or self-willed?

II. IDOLATRY

"You shall not make for yourself any graven image"

- a. Do you ever put other people before God's law by not going to church or committing other sins to please them?
- b. Do you ever want popularity so much that you have not said your prayers for fear of being laughed at?
- c. Do you love money or clothes so much that you sinned to get them?

III. PROFANITY

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain"

- a. Do you swear - misusing the Holy name of Jesus?
- b. Do you ever give away to anxiety rather than turning to God for help?
- c. Do you ever worry, become afraid, or allow yourself to get in a panic?
- d. Do you ever allow yourself to feel and think that even God can't help you?

IV. IRREVERENCE

"Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath-day"

- a. Do you choose to miss Divine Liturgy or other services when you could have attended?
- b. Do you fail to say your prayer morning and night?
- c. Do you fail to say your prayers earnestly?
- d. Do you fail to keep Sunday as you think it should be kept?
- e. Do you do unnecessary work on Sunday?
- f. Do you ever fail to try hard to worship God when in Church?
- g. Are you sometimes irreverent?
- h. Have you been ashamed of your religion?
- i. Have you been ashamed of Jesus?

V. DISOBEDIENCE

"Honor your father and mother"

- a. Are you ever ungrateful for all your parents have done or are doing for you?
- b. Do you disobey them or others over you?
- c. Do you obey them slowly or reluctantly?
- d. Does your behavior embarrass them or cause them anxiety or shame?
- e. Do you defiantly disobey God or ignore His desires for you?
- f. Do you ever show disregard for the laws of the church?
 - g. For the laws of the land?
- h. Do you contribute as much as you should to the support and happiness of your parents?
- i. Do you commit sins with regard to your spouse, children or other members of your family?
 - j. Do you fail to give care and attention to the religious life of your family?
 - k. Regards to Grace at meals?
 - l. Family prayers?
 - m. Church going?
 - o. Do you ever fail to see that your children have adequate and continuous religious instruction?
 - p. Do you ever fail to be just and generous to people in your employment or under your authority?
 - q. Do you attempt to dominate the lives of others?

VI. HATE

"You shall do no murder"

- a. Have you killed anyone, either in deed, or in your heart?
- b. Do you ever wish someone dead?
- c. Do you have angry outbursts?
- d. Struck people?
- e. Hurt them by ridicule or contempt?
- f. Do you curse or swear at people?
- g. Do you gossip about people?
- h. Do you hold grudges & refuse to forgive?
- i. Have you refused to help people in need?
- j. Ignored the sick or poor?
- k. Refused to be friendly with people who are not very popular or not in your class?
- l. Are you afraid to stand up for people who are being mistreated?
- m. Have you tempted another person to sin?

VII. IMPURITY

"You shall not commit adultery"

- a. Do you engage in sexual fantasy?
- b. Have you been impure in word, thought or deed?
- c. Do you look at evil pictures?
- d. Enjoy dirty passages in books or magazines?
- e. Are you ever immodest in actions or dress?
- f. Are you lazy in prayers work or study?
- g. Do you neglect business, family or social duties?
- h. Do you ever eat, drink or smoke more than is good for you?
- i. Do you ever neglect the days of fasting or abstinence?
- j. Broken rules or resolutions which you have made for yourself?
- k. Allowed yourself to be over-engrossed in petty activities to the exclusion of worthwhile things?
- l. Are you ever cowardly, in sickness or in pain?
- m. Been unmindful of the suffering of those around you and in the world?

VIII. THEFT

"You shall not steal"

- a. Have you ever stolen anything?
- b. Have you shared in stolen things?
- c. Do you ever cheat in business, games or lessons?
- d. Are you ever over extravagant in order to show off?
- e. Gambled or bet too much?
- f. Do you ever fail to try hard to pay all your debts?
- g. Do you contract debts unnecessarily?
- h. Do you forget that God has given you all that you have?
- i. Do you fail to give as much as you could to church and charities?
- j. Do you consider yourself stingy?
- k. Do you waste time on trivial things?

IX. DISCONTENT

"You shall not covet"

- a. Are you ever jealous of others because they have more things?
 - b. They have more money?
 - c. They are better looking?
 - d. They are more successful?
- e. Someone loves them more than you?
- f. Do you ever feel sorry for yourself over the prosperity or attainment of others?
- g. Do you ever feel dejected because of the position, talents or fortunes of others?
- h. Are you glad when they fail or are in trouble?
- i. Are you glad when you hear others speak badly of them?
- j. Do you allow yourself to be sad and discouraged at times and not fought to be brave and joyful?
- k. Do you have difficulty in accepting the loss or sorrow or difficult things at the hand of God?
- l. Do you ever think God does not love you?
- m. Do you ever give up trying to be good?

X. DECEIT

"You shall not bear false witness"

- a. Do you tell lies?
- b. Do you exaggerate too much?
- c. Have you ever been unfair to others?
- d. Have you ever been a hypocrite, pretending to be better than you are?
- e. Do you ever allow others to take blame for your faults?
- f. Do you ever put down other people for sins you also commit?

LAST, BUT NOT LEAST

DO YOU FAIL TO GIVE THANKS & PRAISE: TO GOD

- A. :FOR ALL THINGS?**
- B. :AT ALL TIMES?**
- C. :IN ALL PLACES?**